



Legislative Update

Community Media is an Essential Service



In FY21, the Vermont Legislature identified public, educational and government (PEG) access as an “essential service” for Vermont through its continuing coverage of public health messages, ongoing access to public meetings, connecting communities and preserving local identity. In recognition, the Legislature provided financial support for pandemic operations and funded a PEG Study to help plan for the future of community media.

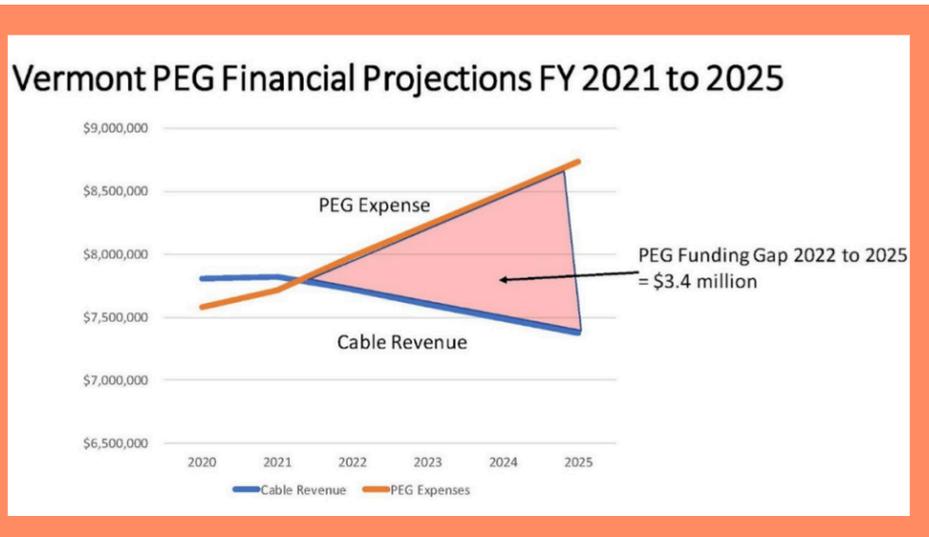
The PEG Study, released in January 2021, confirms the inevitable decline of cable revenue in Vermont (PEG’s primary funding source) and increasing costs necessary to meet increasing demand for public meeting coverage and community communications.

The PEG Study recommended that the Legislature use its authority to restructure Vermont’s telecommunications taxes and take a new look at how public benefits, like PEG, will be funded.

During recent meetings with key legislators, VAN was encouraged to develop short-term funding requests while continuing to work toward the longer-term policy goal.



VAN’s Legislative Request



VAN’s four year funding request provides short term relief to meet community communications needs in all corners of the state, and lays the groundwork for broader policy change in Vermont’s telecommunications tax structure.

The request:

FY22 - \$300,000

FY23 - \$600,000

FY24 - \$1 Million

FY25 - \$1.5 Million